

An Essay
on

Man and Disease,

submitted

to the Faculty of the Homoeopathic
Medical College of Pennsylvania,
for the Degree of Doctor of Medicine,
Session of 1865-6

By

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Man, born of woman,
is of few days and full of trouble.
This a true saying, and it becomes
our duty, as well as privilege, as true
physicians, to use our best endeavors
to divest poor suffering humanity
of some of its weightier afflictions.
Our anticipations are not that we
shall be able to cheat grim Death
of his victims, but only to restore

diseased nature to its normal condition, that life may be less burdensome, and that joys may enter a soul unfettered by an unsound body.

For what are we to care? What sort of creature is this with which we have to do? What is this thing which we call disease? and in what manner does it obtain its ascendancy over this corporeal structure?

Of what means must we make use in combating this enemy of human happiness? These are questions of vital importance to the physician.

The Physical man is composed of various elements, combining to form bone, muscle, integument, fascia, blood, nerve etc, which

can be taken cognizance of by our senses, and can be weighed, analyzed, and each ultimate element clarified. This, ^{is} the groser man, upon whom we gaze, sometimes with admiration, at a work of so great perfection, even Gods masterpiece, "created in his own image," sometimes in abhorrence at a thing so vile, so inharmonious, and so degenerate.

Here is the map upon which we trace the footprints of disease. Here is the book over which we are to bend day after day, and week after week, seeking for the symptoms, the characteristics of the internal malady. It is upon these tissues that the Allopath seeks to wage his warfare

with the enemies of health, endeavoring with his "heroics" to expell them from their spheres of existence, by the side, front or back doors, as his fancy elects.

There is another part of man which to mortal eyes is invisible, and whose nature is scarcely apprehended, yet this it is which controls the functions of the whole corporeal structure. This is the Soul, the Spirit, the vitalizing principle of the human form, the spark emanating from Deity, which is immortal. Whether these terms are all synonymous I will not now stop to discuss, for it is immaterial to the thought before my mind, as all of these combine to form the being whom we call man.

The keeping in, or restoring of these various parts to their perfect harmony, must be our care and constant endeavor.

Disease is a departure from health. Health is the perfect unity or harmony of the ^{vital} forces. These forces work unseen. The derangement of the tissues which we observe upon the surface, is the thing generally called the disease. But this ^{is} not the disease. It is only the outward manifestation of the disturbance of the equilibrium of the Vital forces. These constitute the true man, the patient for whom we are to exert ourselves, the one to whom an admonition must be given that he may bestir himself to repair his dwelling, lest it

decay

decay, fall into ruins, and he be expelled from his own tenement to wander homeless through the wide universe.

All know how utterly absurd it would be to administer remedial agents to a body from which the Spirit has departed, and yet, many would have us believe that disease is a material thing, to be exorcised by chemical or mechanical agents alone. If this is not expressed ^{ed.} in words, it is spoken clearly by their actions. If this be true, why can they not heal a diseased tissue without the aid of the vital power? Chemical agents will act upon organized bodies that have neither Spirit nor life, but cannot restore a diseased condition to a normal one, when once bereft of the guiding Spirit.

No one will deny that effects are produced by invisible and imponderable agents, and too by those which we only know to exist by their effects. In what manner they exercise their power is unknown to us, but the fact that they have power is indisputable. We know that one mind may exercise an influence over another even though it be miles away; that an emanation from a person afflicted with Variola, Rubella, Parotitis, Pertussis or other infectious diseases, will communicate the same symptoms to another person; also, that mind exercises power over matter; for example when a hand is moved, a limb flexed or extended, or any voluntary act performed. If a body be placed in the air at a distance from the earth, and nothing be interposed

to prevent it from falling, the force of gravitation will bring it to the ground. The same force holds the earth in its own position among the Planets of the Universe.

God has so ordered it ^{some of} that the most potent forces in nature are silent and unseen, as the preceding examples show. So also the causes of disease cannot with certainty be told. The Pathology of most diseases may be definitely shown, but the origin, or primary causes of them can only be guessed at. It is known that there is a something given off from the body of a person having Small Pox, which, coming in contact with the tissues of another person in whom it finds a congenial soil, develops

and produces in him symptoms similar to those of the former individual. It is possible that the shape and size of this sporule or emanation may be ascertained, and a name, even, be given to it, but the modus operandi of this germ upon the system cannot be satisfactorily explained. Theories may perhaps be advanced, one saying that it is inhaled, passes into the lungs, comes in contact with the blood, and, producing certain changes in that fluid, causes the disease. Another may say that it operates first on the nerves, then perhaps on the blood and the rest of the system. But what does that amount to? It does not tell why it operates in this manner, or why ^{it produces} the dis-

case in a form so similar to its prototype.

It would almost seem that every thing in nature, that has life, has also some innate power that gives it shape and fashions it like unto the class of objects ^{from} whence it sprang. For example, the leaves of a certain kind of tree are alike in their general appearance, and the bark presents the same aspect on different branches, and on different trees of the same class. In the grasses, each variety preserves its own peculiar characteristic, and so with all things; each one has its type, and merely saying that "they are formed thus according to a law of nature," hard-

ly explains the fact to the full satisfaction of all. Thus may we not easily reason that the sporule of the Small Pox, or any other disease of that nature first makes its impress upon the Spiritual part of the being and through this, acts upon the tissues? I do not say that it is so, but, that I see no evidence disproving it. This being the case, what so fitting to wrestle with disease, as a drug divested of its cumbersome corporeal structure by dynamization? Experience has clearly shown that the sick are healed sooner and with more certainty by the attenuated remedy, than ^{by} the crude drug, and that the farther it is re-

moved from its proper part, the more
certain and lasting is its action.

Working in the light of this experi-
ence, let us strive to higher attain-
ments, and take care that we bring
no discredit upon the teachings of
our noble "Father in medicine."